

14th Sunday of the Year A Cycle 7/6/11

A young child is like a sieve. A little boy or girl drinks in their environment. Parents often tell me, don't say or do something in front of a child you don't want them to pick up because they will soon be saying and doing the same thing back to you.

I have a nephew who is the head of youth ministry for the Diocese of London, Canada about 80 miles from here. He is in his mid thirties and has two young children. His wife is a teacher. He does not have a large salary, and while many around him make more money, he realizes that with the income he and his wife makes, they are richer than 80% of the world's population.

What he says he really wants from his job more than an increase in income is continued consideration of his need for more time to grow as a loving father and husband.

He and his wife have an active faith life. He is grateful to God for who he is and what he has.

He said to me the other day, "Uncle Don, if you ever want to get away, we have an extra bedroom and you can come and get a few days rest."

Can you imagine the values his two young children are picking up from him and his wife? Those children see a couple who love the Lord and who are committed to each other and the offspring of their love.

They seem to be living out the words of today's gospel well: "Father, you have hidden these things (about your love for me and the world) from the wise and learned and revealed them to the merest children.

It is not to the rich and famous,

**It is not to the people who seek high paying careers and continual advancement,
It is not to those who always have to be getting ahead and forcing their values on others that the Father comes.
It is to those who, with humble hearts, are open to growing closer to the source of life and boldly live out that life who are happy and content.**

‘Yes, Jesus says, everything has been handed over to me by my Father. EVERYTHING!

We know that the Father sent the son so that all of us could have eternal life, the fullness of life both now and forever. We simply need to be open to the Father as Jesus was. We simple need to approach the one Jesus calls “Abba” , “Daddy” , with the same childlike openness and willingness to learn as Jesus did and we too will receive a very special gift. We need to approach God with the same energy for learning as a child approaches his or her parents.

(pause)

**And what is the great gift God has for us today? What is this “everything he wishes to bestow on us?
*“Come to me all who labor and are heavily burdened and I will give you rest. “***

(pause)

This weekend is fourth of July. So often many of us limp into these holidays seeking some time for refreshment and rest. Have you ever had the experience of working so hard, had such a busy day or week, that all you can do is come home and flop into bed with your clothes on and fall asleep? I remember taking exams in college. After a few weeks of extended hours of study, my mind was fried! All I wanted to do is crawl into a corner with a pillow and be left alone for days.

Sometimes it is not the pressure of extended work which

burdens us. Sometimes it is taxation, or discrimination or prejudice or being a victim of crime. In fact, Christ's invitation goes out to all who are world weary, / who no longer find zest and pleasure in life, / whose backs are bent with the burden of each day.

Jesus offers us rest, but it is not the rest that comes with less work or more sleep. Jesus is not suggesting shorter working hours or more pay. Jesus is suggesting the rest of the seventh day of creation when God had created everything good and then he RESTED. Jesus is suggesting the kind of rest which St. Augustine meant when he said, "Our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

HIS rest will come when we take seriously his words, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart." The yoke we place upon our shoulders, the rest Jesus promises us, will only come when we become his disciples. When we learn to live meek and humble lives, when we learn to live with hearts of thanksgiving, we will find the rest we so desperately seek in life.